

# **Being Alive**

Evolutions in Being P.O. Box 4008 Chelmsford, MA. 01824 Eibeing.com 978-256-0438

Rhubarb Root has a Long Tradition of Being Used to Treat Constipation

## Used by Ancient Chinese Doctors & Verified by Modern Science

Rhubarb root has a long tradition of being used to treat constipation. Rhubarb has been used by the Chinese since around 3,000 BC. Modern medicine has also confirmed the medicinal value of this herb for constipation with certainty.

Rhubarb (Rheum palmatum) does help with constipation. This herb is one of the most ancient and important herbs in traditional chinese medicine. (source 1) Rhubarb's use as a laxative dates back to 3,000 BC. (source 3) And, consequently, there is a lot of widespread, documented use of rhubarb as an effective constipation treatment.

The renowned, late Dr. James Duke (<u>more about Dr. Duke from the USDA</u>), an expert on herbal medicine, in his book The Green Pharmacy Herbal Handbook<sup>(source 2)</sup> states rhubarb is quite effective for constipation.

Dr. Duke explains that in very small amounts the tannins in rhubarb help stop diarrhea; yet, in larger doses the anthraquinones in the herb interact with bacteria in the digestive tract and thereby produce compounds that trigger intestinal contractions and lead to bowel movements. Rhubarb is also high in fiber, which may help with constipation as well.

At the time of this writing, there is still some argument as to exactly how rhubarb causes its laxative effect. But, this seems to be in the arena of scientific interest; all you probably need to know is that it is a very effective treatment for constipation.

But, be warned. Prolonged use of rhubarb as a laxative should not be undertaken. This is because your bowels can develop a dependency on rhubarb to have a bowel movement. This advice usually applies to any laxative; natural or synthetic.

## The Island That Time Forgot

I was 13 when the wealthy town of Greenwich, Conn., claimed ownership of Great Captain Island for use as a public beach — but 'public' only for Greenwich residents.

By Renée Loth Contributor July 14, 2023

Proust had his madeleines. Tommy and Fiona had their Brigadoon. Ahab had his great white whale. And until last week I had all three in the form of a scrubby, 17-acre spit of sand in the Long Island Sound called Great Captain Island.

I spent most of my childhood summers on this <u>eyeglass-shaped island</u> about a mile off the Connecticut shore. As young as 8 or 9 I was free to wander at will, picking wild blackberries; populating my Gaudi-like sand castles with periwinkles collected on the sandbar; constructing memories. There were no concession stands, no chair rentals; just me and Neptune's gifts.

At one end of Great Captain Island (variously called Great Captain's Island) were a <u>19th-century</u> <u>granite lighthouse</u> and Coast Guard station, where my older brother would hang out with the guys, playing cards and drinking beer. Once, they let me climb the winding narrow steps of the iron lighthouse tower to hand crank the massive lamp. At the other end were the <u>ruins of an old</u> <u>gambling casino</u> dating from the 1920s. It burned when a flare was dropped on it sometime after World War II, but it still had a crumbling foundation, a few stone lamp posts — and all sorts of imagined ghosts and buried treasure irresistible to a young girl with an exploratory mind.

For several years we rented a rustic cabin on the island, which had running water but no electricity. I spent endless blissful hours there painting clamshells with my cheap watercolor set, drinking cherry soda, making paper chains to decorate the porch, and flying a kite far over the sound. On a clear day you could see the Manhattan skyline.

But then, with the swift cruelty of bureaucracies everywhere, we lost access to the island. I was 13 when the wealthy town of Greenwich, Conn., <u>claimed ownership</u> for use as a public beach — but "public" only for Greenwich residents. We were from Port Chester, N.Y., on the wrong side of those tracks, and my father would never dream of flouting the new rules. He sold the boat and discovered new passions, and I began nursing a class grievance against Greenwich that lasted more than 50 years.

For decades I schemed about getting back to Great Captain Island. It became something of an obsession to me, a pursuit that grew more gripping with each unconsummated summer. I kept a rock on my desk, shot through with pink quartz, that my mother had picked up there. I would Google articles about the island and steam with righteous indignation over the destruction of the cabins (in the 1980s) or marvel at how the mostly barren place of my memory had grown so lush with vegetation that the Audubon society <u>established a heron rookery</u> there. I would longingly pore over an aerial photo that my father, a professional photographer, took in the 1950s. It shows our cabin, the lighthouse, and other key places he marked on tracing paper laid over the picture. His block-printed handwriting on that fragile paper is an inheritance more precious to me than gold.

This year, prompted by a milestone birthday, I redoubled my efforts to return to the idyll of my youth. After all the regrets and resentments I had built up in my mind, it was humbling to discover how helpful and kind everyone in Greenwich was – from the recreation department staff to the island caretaker – and how easily I secured a special one-day pass for a hot Friday in July.

I'm not ashamed to admit that tears came to my eyes when I boarded the little ferry for the 20 minute ride back to 1966. We chugged past another small island popular with families, past a bell buoy I could remember clanging on choppy days, until the island sands hove into view. Thar she blows!

As a child I never asked how exactly we managed to rent our cabin or enjoy a berth at Great Captain Island, but now I know that in those years it was owned by a corporation, Aerotech, which used it as a retreat for executives. Somehow my father had an in with someone high up in the company, and we became members of the private Captain's Island Club, with docking privileges for nominal annual dues. So the joke's on me; our access was no less exclusive than that enjoyed by the moneyed residents of Greenwich after all.

Memory is a trickster. When I returned, everything seemed smaller, more rugged, more overgrown. I traced the path to our cabin site but the way was blocked by brambles and gulls threatened clamorously from their nests in the trees. I beat a retreat to the swimming beach and dove into the calm, cool waters, facing Greenwich. It was a salty baptism, cleansing me of my grudges and letting my gratitude shine.

# Shark Awareness Day is Today, what a Better Way to Celebrate Than with Shark Trivia

Sharks are some of the most well-known and well-loved animals in the ocean, but how much do you *really* know about them? Test your elasmobranch education with these trivia questions (and don't forget to share your shark knowledge with your friends.)

Let's start with the questions-scroll down to see the answers.

- 1. How long can a Greenland shark live?
  - A. 100 years
  - B. 225 years
  - C. 400 years
- 2. True or false: The great white shark is the largest fish in the ocean.
- 3. How many species of hammerhead are there?
  - A. 3
  - B. 9
  - C. 15

Ok, let's see how you did:

How long can a Greenland shark live? 400 years. Scientists discovered a 400-year-old female Greenland shark, who set a new record for the oldest living vertebrate. She's seen a lot, to say the least.Brush up on your Greenland shark trivia >>

https://oceanconservancy.org/wildlife-factsheet/greenland-shark/?ea.tracking.id=23LPGNBBXX

**True or false: The great white shark is the largest fish in the ocean.***False.* The title of "largest fish in the sea" is held by another shark: the whale shark. Whale sharks can grow up to 40 feet long and weigh up to 20,000 pounds. <u>Read up on whale shark facts >></u>

https://oceanconservancy.org/wildlife-factsheet/whale-shark/?ea.tracking.id=23LPGNBBXX

How many species of hammerhead are there? 9. There are nine species of hammerhead, including the scalloped, smooth and—perhaps most famously—the great hammerhead. Learn more about what makes hammerheads unique >>. <a href="https://oceanconservancy.org/wildlife-factsheet/hammerhead-shark/?ea.tracking.id=23LPGNBBXX">https://oceanconservancy.org/wildlife-factsheet/hammerhead-shark/?ea.tracking.id=23LPGNBBXX</a>

How did you do? Text TRIVIA to 52551 for more fun questions like this from Ocean Conservancy. Happy Shark Awareness Day.  $\checkmark$ 

For our ocean,

Robyn Stegman Senior Manager, Digital Campaigns Ocean Conservancy

## **Cleaner Water**

The continuing PFAS contamination crisis means that an estimated 200 million Americans across 2,800 communities may have water that contains unhealthy levels of these harmful "forever chemicals."

A home water filter can be a fantastic way to reduce the levels of PFAS you may be exposed to from drinking tap water. But with so many filters on the market claiming to eliminate PFAS, how can you know which is best?

<u>EWG has the answer.</u> Our scientists bought and used 10 different types of water filters, testing them in real homes using their water. We then measured how much each filter reduced PFAS. The good news? We found several filters that eliminate detectable PFAS from water.

https://www.ewg.org/research/getting-forever-chemicals-out-drinking-water-ewgs-guide-pfas-waterfilters?emci=ba4eeed5-4622-ee11-a9bb-00224832eb73&emdi=c94eeed5-4622-ee11-a9bb-00224832eb73&ceid=691484

## Madison Park Valedictorian is First in Family to go to College - and to Graduate High School

By Jeremy C. Fox, The Boston Globe

When Lourdjinia Louis, this year's valedictorian at Madison Park Technical Vocational High School, begins classes at UMass Boston in a few weeks, she'll be the first in her family to go to college - perhaps one of many students there who can make that claim.

But this hardworking teen has already achieved another milestone that has her parents beaming with pride: She's the first to graduate high school.

Louis came here five-and-a-half years ago from Haiti, <u>the poorest country in the Western</u> <u>Hemisphere</u>, bewildered by US culture and speaking no English when she enrolled in Boston Public Schools.

The secret to her academic success is simple, according to Louis and some of the teachers who know her best: She asked lots of questions, even as she sometimes struggled to find the words to frame them, raising her hand more often than other students and engaging with teachers until she understood the material.

"I ask a lot of questions so I can get what [the teacher] wants me to do," she said in an interview. "I'm a little slow, but when I get the thing, I get it forever. When I get it, I can teach everyone for you."

Louis also stayed after school every day and came in on Saturdays for tutoring. Some teachers allowed her to submit class essays multiple times for corrections, to help refine her writing in English, she said. Wherever there was an opportunity for improvement, she took it.

Her pre-calculus and calculus teacher, Jamaal Shaheed, said he first met Louis when she was a freshman, and she has always been a "very inquisitive . . . hardworking student," but she wasn't talkative at first.

"Over a period of time, she pushed herself to speak a little bit more, to engage a little bit more with her classmates and her peers," said Shaheed, 52. "I think her comfort zone is to be reserved and quiet. But when she's trying to learn to understand something, I think that's what pushed her and propelled her to connecting and speaking with her peers and just offering herself as someone to share ideas with."

Shaheed said Louis isn't afraid to fail in front of her peers, something that takes "a lot of courage, because I think that oftentimes . . . people find it difficult to show our weaknesses or to show our shortcomings . . . for fear of being judged or ridiculed."

Louis spend her childhood in Port-au-Prince and moved to Boston in December 2017 with her mother, Annelia Jean, and her brother, Loosen Louis, now 14 - none of them able to speak English, she said.

The children's father, Lamartine Louis, initially remained in Haiti, where a gang of criminals threatened to kill him for organizing meetings opposing their activities, his daughter said, as Haiti has been overwhelmed in recent years by violent gangs responsible for hundreds of murders and kidnappings.

Gangs now control an estimated 80 percent of Port-au-Prince, and the country's underfunded Haitian National Police has only about 13,000 active duty officers to serve a nation of more than 11 million — too few to combat the surging violence, The Associated Press <u>reported this month</u>.

Lamartine Louis now lives in safety in the Dominican Republic and has been watching his daughter's achievements from afar with pride, she said.

"He sent my graduation video to everyone in my country, like, 'That's my daughter! My daughter just graduated!' "Lourdjinia Louis said. "When my dad knew I was valedictorian, he was [very] happy."

Annelia, Lourdjinia, and Loosen came to Boston and found a home in Hyde Park, where they stayed three years before moving to Mattapan, where they remained. Annelia found work as a housekeeper, and Lourdjinia enrolled in the Washington Irving Middle School in Roslindale, she said.

But she was transferred in eighth grade to Mildred Avenue K-8 School in Mattapan after her mother signed a document from the school district that she didn't understand, Lourdjinia said. After about a month, she returned to the Irving.

"When you first come, it's hard because you don't know [anything]," Lourdjinia Louis said. "They ask you to sign, sign, sign — you don't even know what you're signing. You just sign.... That was scary."

Louis loves people and hates to see anyone suffer, she said. Growing up in Port-au-Prince, she sometimes saw hungry children her own age on the city streets asking passersby for money. Now, she hopes to use the opportunities life has afforded her to become a doctor and help others, especially back home, where there is a desperate need for medical care, she said.

"Growing up in Haiti, to go to the hospital, you have to pay," she said. "If you don't have money, you will be dead."

Louis is taking summer classes at Bunker Hill Community College now and working part time at Boston Medical Center, where she takes patients' vital signs, collects samples for testing, and helps conduct electrocardiograms. When Alvarez watched Louis Doranggie Manso Alvarez, who teaches aspiring medical assistants at Madison Park, said that when she met Louis, "She was really quiet, but she was always eager to be the first one to answer."

"Over the years, I learned that the quieter ones, the ones that try to stay back and not give too much attention to themselves, are the ones that actually know how to do this stuff even better," Alvarez said.

Louis always completed her work on time, often early, and if she got an A-minus she would ask how to bring her grade up, Alvarez said. "And I'm like, 'It's an A-minus - it's OK!' " she said.

demonstrate how to perform a medical procedure in class, she could tell the teen had been practicing at home.

"She has a bright future ahead of her. . . . She knows what she wants, and she's going to accomplish it," Alvarez said. "I can't wait to see her five or 10 years from now, doing what she wanted to do."

## The Cleanest 15 Fruits and Veggies

Add these to your diet

https://www.ewg.org/foodnews/clean-fifteen.php

## Actions are the Latest in a series of Steps the Biden Administration has Taken to Eliminate Hidden Junk Fees and Lower Prescription Costs

Today, President Biden announced a series of new actions under a core pillar of his "Bidenomics" agenda to lower health care costs and crack down on surprise junk fees for American families and consumers. Since the beginning of his Administration, President Biden has passed historic legislation to lower health care costs for tens of millions of Americans, took on Big Pharma to finally allow Medicare to negotiate lower prescription drug prices, and took action to eliminate hidden fees in every sector of the economy. Today, the Administration is taking additional steps to continue to deliver on those promises.

Today, the President is announcing:

- The Biden-Harris Administration is cracking down on junk insurance. New proposed rules would close loopholes that the previous administration took advantage of that allow companies to offer misleading insurance products that can discriminate based on pre-existing conditions and trick consumers into buying products that provide little or no coverage when they need it most. These plans leave families surprised by thousands of dollars in medical expenses when they actually use health care services like a surgery. If finalized, the rule would limit so-called "short-term" plans to truly short time periods, close loopholes made worse by the previous administration, and establish a clear disclosure for consumers of the limits of these plans.
- The Administration is releasing important guidance on rules against surprise medical billing. Biden-Harris Administration rules are already preventing as many as 1 million surprise medical bills every month. New guidance will help stop providers from gaming the system by evading the surprise billing rules with creative contractual loopholes that still leave consumers with unexpected costs.
- The Administration is announcing new steps to protect consumers from unfair medical debt. For the first time in history, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, HHS, and Treasury are collaborating to explore whether health care provider and third-party efforts to encourage consumers to sign up for medical credit cards and loans are operating outside of existing consumer protections and breaking the law. Medical credit cards and loans often lead to higher costs without consumers fully understanding the risks.
- The Department of Health and Human Services is releasing a new report showing that nearly 19 million seniors and other Part D beneficiaries are projected to save \$400 per year on prescription drugs when President Biden's \$2,000 out-of-pocket cap goes into effect. It's also releasing state by state data that demonstrates how seniors across the country are helped by just one element of the President's robust agenda to lower prescription drug prices.

These actions are the latest in a series of steps the Administration has taken to address hidden junk fees across industries, including: cracking down on bounced check and overdraft fees in the banking industry, which is saving consumers more than \$5 billion every year; proposing rules to require airlines to disclose all of their fees up front and successfully pushing a number of airlines to end family seating fees; and mobilizing private sector action to eliminate hidden junk fees for concert and sports tickets.

#### Cracking down on junk insurance

The Affordable Care Act has helped tens of millions of Americans access high-quality, affordable health insurance and protects Americans from being discriminated against because of pre-existing conditions. But actions from the previous administration allowed insurance companies to take advantage of loopholes in the law and sell "junk insurance" plans that evade these protections. These "junk insurance" plans leave families surprised by thousands of dollars in bills, often because the insurance plan claims they have a pre-existing condition that isn't covered. For example, a man in Montana faced  $\frac{543,000 \text{ in health care costs}}{1000 \text{ supervised by nearly } \frac{220,000 \text{ in bills}}{2000 \text{ or bills}}$  for an amputation her junk plan refused to cover. Today, the Biden-Harris Administration is proposing rules to crack down on this junk insurance, as part of the latest efforts by the Administration to eliminate hidden and junk fees in every industry across the economy. These actions will reduce scam insurance plans that offer really no insurance at all.

- "Short-term" plans must be truly short-term. Under the new rules, if finalized, plans that claim to be "short-term" health insurance would be limited to just 3 months, or a maximum of 4 months, if extended instead of the 3 years that junk plans can offer today as a result of changes made by the previous administration.
- Income replacement "fixed indemnity" plans cannot mimic comprehensive health insurance. Under the proposed rules, plans that want to be exempt from the rules for health insurance because they are designed to replace lost income when people get sick, rather than provide full medical coverage have to live up to their original purpose and cannot be designed like comprehensive health insurance. This means that plans would need to make clear that people signing up for these plans would get a defined benefit, like \$100 per day of illness, instead of thinking that they have comprehensive insurance. This proposed rule aims to prevent Americans from being on the hook for high medical costs, like a woman who needed an amputation and was <u>left with</u> \$20,000 in medical debt because her plan did not include comprehensive coverage.
- *Plans have to clearly disclose limits*. Under the proposed rules, plans are required to provide consumers with a clear disclaimer that explains the limits of their benefits, including to existing consumers currently enrolled in these plans.

#### Preventing surprise medical billing

Before President Biden took office, millions of people received surprise bills for health care they thought was in-network care covered by their health plan. This could include when people need emergency care and are taken to the nearest hospital, or when a pregnant woman delivers her baby at an in-network hospitals only to find out that the anesthesiologist who cared for her is actually out-of-network. These surprise bills can cost people hundreds or thousands of dollars, averaging between \$750 to \$2,600. The Administration is protecting millions of consumers from surprise medical bills through the implementation of the No Surprises Act, which has already protected 1 million Americans every month since January 1, 2022 from unfair, undeserved out-of-network charges and balance bills.

The Biden-Harris Administration is taking an important next step to protect consumers from surprise medical bills by issuing guidance to clarify that payers cannot use loopholes to avoid surprising billing protections:

- Ending abuse of "in-network" designation. Today, some health plans contract with hospitals, but try to claim that they are not technically "in-network" which can expose consumers to higher payments when they have to make a hospital visit. The Administration today is making clear this is not allowed under federal law: health care services provided by these providers are either out-of-network and subject to the surprise billing protections, or they are in-network and subject to the ACA's annual limitation on cost-sharing, further protecting consumers from excessive out-of-pocket costs.
- Facility fees treated like other health care costs. The Administration is also concerned about an increase in patients being charged "facility fees" for health care provided outside of hospitals, like at a doctor's office. These fees are often a surprise for consumers. The Administration today is making clear that health plans and providers must make information about these facility fees publicly available to consumers, as well as other price information for services and items they cover or provide. In addition, nonparticipating providers and nonparticipating emergency facilities cannot evade the protections of the No Surprises Act, including the prohibition on balance billing, by renaming charges otherwise prohibited under the No Surprises Act as "facility fees."

#### Protecting consumers from unfair medical debt

Increasingly, health care providers are signing up patients for third-party medical credit cards and loans to help pay for care. These credit cards often include teaser rates and deferred interest features that lead to higher costs for consumers, may be offered even when low- or nocost alternatives, such as zero-interest payment plans, financial assistance, or health coverage may be available. Health care providers may be promoting these products because they could allow providers to get paid faster, outsource servicing and collections costs to third parties, receive a higher payment from consumers who otherwise would pay a discounted price for care, and in some circumstances, receive a share of the interest revenue gained by the third-party financial company. Use of these products may complicate insurance coverage and the availability of financial assistance, and consumers may not fully understand the risks associated with these products, leading to higher costs and negative impacts on consumers' financial, physical, and emotional wellbeing.

For the first time ever, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), HHS, and Treasury are collaborating on the needs of health care consumers by releasing a Request for Information (RFI) to learn more about this emerging practice and solicit comment on potential policy actions. Part of this RFI will explore whether providers are operating outside of existing consumer protections, because once medical bills are placed on medical credit cards, there may be gaps in how various consumer protections apply.

New data shows nearly 19 million seniors and other Medicare beneficiaries will save an estimated \$400 per year in prescription drug costs because of President Biden's out-of-pocket spending cap Thanks to President Biden's Inflation Reduction Act, out-of-pocket spending on prescription drugs at the pharmacy will be capped at \$2,000 per year for Medicare Part D enrollees starting in 2025. Today, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) released data showing that 18.7 million (or 1 in 3) seniors and people with disabilities who are enrolled in Part D plans will save, on average, \$400 per year when the \$2,000 cap and other Inflation Reduction Act provisions go into effect in 2025. And some enrollees will save even more: 1.9 million enrollees with the highest drug costs will save an average of \$2,500 per year starting in 2025. Overall, the law's Part D benefits provisions will reduce enrollee out-of-pocket spending by about \$7.4 billion annually.

To view data broken down by state and demographic, visit here.

Today's actions follow significant milestones achieved last week in implementing President Biden's historic law to lower health care and prescription drug costs. On June 30, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services released revised guidance that describes how they will negotiate lower prescription drug prices for seniors later this year. The first ten drugs selected for negotiation will be announced by September 1, 2023. Also last week, the \$35 monthly cap on insulin for Medicare Part B beneficiaries went into effect. Already 1.5 million Medicare Part D beneficiaries were saving up to hundreds of dollars per month on insulin costs because of the Inflation Reduction Act, and many more will benefit from these cost savings starting this month.

## Mapped: The Safest Cities in America

The phrase "small town America" often conjures up images of white picket fences, well-trimmed lawns, and big houses. But how safe is modern-day suburbia in America?

Some of the smallest places in the country can actually be among the most dangerous. Take for example Bessemer, Alabama, with a population of around 26,000 and a violent crime rate of 33.1 per every 1,000 residents.

That said, there are many small cities that are true havens for families across the United States. This map showcases the safest cities in the U.S., using FBI data and Census Bureau populations compiled by <u>NeighborhoodScout</u> in 2023.

Note: The source only considered cities with a population of 25,000 or higher. This report is based on total *index crimes* reported in each city, which includes arson, burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, murder, rape, armed robbery, and aggravated assault.

## Top 100 Safest Cities in the U.S.

https://www.visualcapitalist.com/safest-cities-in-the-us/

# **Eating Crunchy**

<u>https://foodrevolution.org/blog/healthy-crunchy-</u> snacks/?j=223795&sfmc\_sub=17605609&l=137\_HTML&u=3198111&mid=514008241&jb=61

## **RECIPES:**

Chili Lime Kale Chips:<u>https://foodrevolution.org/blog/healthy-crunchy-</u> snacks/?j=223795&sfmc\_sub=17605609&l=137\_HTML&u=3198111&mid=514008241&jb=61 Moroccan Baked Chickpeas: <u>https://foodrevolution.org/recipes/moroccan-baked-chickpeas/</u>

Remember the notion that we like crunchy foods because crunch once signified "good for us"? Well, there are still plenty of opportunities for healthy crunch in the modern world. Here's a short list of raw and minimally processed foods to turn to when you need a snap, crackle, or crunch in your mouth:

- <u>Apples</u>
- Celery
- Carrots
- <u>Jicama</u>
- Peppers
- Cabbage & <u>kimchi</u>
- Brussels sprouts
- Broccoli
- Cauliflower
- Radishes
- Water Chestnuts
- Cucumbers & pickles
- Snap peas
- <u>Nuts</u>
- Seeds
- Popcorn (only healthy if you don't put unhealthy things on it!)
- Rice Cakes

Edgar Cayce

# Wednesday July 19

"If your ideal is set in the material things, only material things can be the reaping or the harvest. If your ideal is set in higher things, and your acts day by day are in keeping with those, then the harvest may be expected to be in that proportion commensurate with that given."

> CCL 1264-1 \*CCL = Contemporary Cayce Language

# Thursday July 13

Let no day then pass that you do not speak a CHEERY and an encouraging word to someone!"

> CCL 1754-1 \*CCL = Contemporary Cayce Language

# Wednesday, July 12

"Each one who has a soul has a psychic power."

Edgar Cayce reading 5392-1

# **Evolutions in Being**

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